Sl.No.	Name of the State	Districts identified
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Prakasam, Guntur, Nellore, Chittoor, Cuddapah, Ananthapur, Kurnool, Adilabad, Karimnagar, Khammam, Mahbubnagar, Medak, Nalgonda, Nizamabad, Rangareddy and Warangal
2.	Karnataka	Belgaum, Hassan, Chitradurga, Chikmaglur, Kodagu and Shimoga
3.	Kerala	Wayanad, Palakkad and Kasaragod
4.	Maharashtra	Akola, Wardha, Amravati, Buldana, Wasim and Yavatmal.

Increasing temperature—a great risk for food security

†1186. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that change in weather, particularly continuous increasing temperature has turned out to be a great risk for the food security of the country particularly production of wheat;

(b) the steps Government is taking to produce seeds to meet this situation in coming times; and

(c) whether Government made any assessment of the effectiveness of GM seeds in tackling the situation of change in weather?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir. The increasing temperature particularly in the months of February and March could affect the wheat production and risk the food security of the country.

(b) The Government is contemplating to develop crops for better adaptability to changes in weather such as increasing temperature by conventional and biotechnological techniques.

(c) No GM seeds in any crop have been produced so far to tackle the situation of change in weather.

Investment in agriculture sector by private sector

†1187. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the private sector is considering to invest in the agriculture sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether this will help in removing the problems of agriculture sector and improve the quality of agriculture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) As per the data compiled by Central Statistical Organization, the private sector investment measured in terms of Gross Capital Formation (GCF) (at constant

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

1999-2000 prices) in the agriculture and allied sectors has increased from Rs. 43,035 crore in 2003-04 to Rs. 46,215 crore in 2004-05 and further to Rs. 49,987 crore in 2005-06. Private sector participation is encouraged in developing agricultural marketing infrastructure and in providing alternate marketing channels for agri-produce in order to facilitate establishment of private markets, allow direct marketing and contract farming to improve post-harvest management.

Under the Central Sector Scheme "Development and Strengthening of Infrastructure Facilities for Production and Distribution of Quality Seeds", assistance is provided for boosting seed production in the private sector. Under the Scheme, back-ended capital subsidy is provided to private companies, individual entrepreneurs, self-help groups and seed co-operatives at the rate of 25 per cent of the project cost subject to a maximum limit of Rs. 10.00 lakh per unit on seed infrastructure development.

Severe drought in Bundelkhand

1188. KUMARI NIRMALA DESHPANDE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the people of Bundelkhand area of Uttar Pradesh are facing severe drought and there is no water even for drinking;

(b) if so, what measures are being taken to save the agriculture of that area;

(c) the reasons for this grave situation; and

(d) the short term and long term measures being planned to save the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (d) It is primarily the responsibility of the State Government to take necessary measures in the wake of natural calamities including drought. The Government of India supplements the efforts of the State Government with financial and logistic support. There is ready availability of funds with them in the Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) for taking such measures.

The Government of Uttar Pradesh have informed that due to scarcity of rainfall, Bundelkhand area has been declared drought prone area by them. The State Government have sanctioned Rs. 2 crore per district for Bundelkhand area to tackle the problem of drought. Recovery of land revenue has also been stayed till 31st March, 2008. The State Government have also sanctioned Rs. 20 crores for Banda district, Rs. 5 crores for Chitrakoot district, Rs. 16 crores for Hamirpur district, Rs. 10 crores for Jalaun district, Rs. 20 crores for Jhansi district, Rs. 22 crores for Lalitpur district and Rs. 15 crores for Mahoba district, for agriculture input subsidy. The State's Planning and Agriculture Department have prepared a special package to tackle the situation.

Lower interest rate for agriculture sector

1189. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to lower interest for the agriculture sector and provide cheaper farm inputs in view of the growing distress of the farmers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has any proposal to set up a corpus fund for the farmers; and